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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/645,242	08/21/2003	Matthias Helmstetter	TRW(ASG)6703	7537
26294	7590	07/13/2006	EXAMINER	
TAROLLI, SUNDHEIM, COVELL & TUMMINO L.L.P.			ILAN, RUTH	
1300 EAST NINTH STREET, SUITE 1700			ART UNIT	
CLEVEVLAND, OH 44114			PAPER NUMBER	
			3616	

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/645,242	Applicant(s) HELMSTETTER ET AL.	
	Examiner Ruth Ilan	Art Unit 3616	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11, 13 and 14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.
2. Claims 1, 2 and 4-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sutherland et al. (US 6,250,665) in view of Seidl et al. (US 5,199,834) and Loudin et al. (US 4,263,833). Sutherland et al. discloses a gas bag module comprising: a reaction plate 28 supporting a gas generator 12; a plastic retainer 70 (see column 4, lines 20-21) having cylindrical extensions 64 extending through openings 74 in a gas bag 14 and openings 76 in the reaction plate 28; and screws 66 received in the cylindrical extensions 64. Regarding the amendment of 6/16/06, Sutherland et al. additionally teaches that gas bag is connected to the gas generator holder in such a manner that the gas bag is not detached.

Sutherland et al. lacks drive screws, and extensions with axial slits, detent shoulders and internal beads. Seidl et al. teaches a gas bag module having components secured together by a drive screw 20 (see column 6, line 52 to column 7, line 16). Loudin et al. teaches a drive screw 16 that is driven into a retainer 12. The retainer 12 has a cylindrical extension 14 with axial slits 30, detent shoulders 46 and internal beads (see Fig. 6A). From these teachings of Seidl et al. and Loudin et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Sutherland et al. by replacing the screws with drive screws as taught by Seidl et al. in order to simplify and speed up assembly. Further, it would have been obvious to modify Sutherland et al. by providing the extensions with axial slits, detent shoulders and internal beads, as taught by Loudin et al., in order to increase the strength of the connection.
3. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sutherland et al. in view of Seidl et al. and Loudin et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Davis et al. (EP 709259). The Sutherland et al., Seidl et al. and Loudin

et al. combination lacks a reaction plate made of plastic. Davis et al. teaches that module elements may be made of plastic or aluminum (see column 2, lines 5-6). From this teaching of Davis et al., it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify Sutherland et al. by forming the reaction plate of plastic in order to reduce its weight.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 13 and 14 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 6/16/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

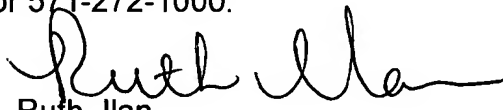
6. Applicant argues that the combination of Seidl with Sutherland is not obvious because Seidl teaches a connection that is frangible. Seidl is relied on for the general teaching of using a drive screw in an air bag environment., not the particulars of the type of drive screw. The motivation to replace the screw of Sutherland with a driven connection is in order to simplify and speed up assembly. It is quicker to pound in the connection than to screw it in. In general, drive screws are well known fastening connections that are useful because they can be inserted quickly, but can be removed and reused. Seidl is relied on very generally to show that one of ordinary skill in the art would clearly contemplate a driven connection in the air bag art. The motivation for using a drive screw is found directly in Seidl et al., as noted above, the drive connection is quick, and additionally avoids stripping the threads. Sutherland already teaches that the type of connection should maintain the gas bag in an attached state. Loudin is relied on for the particulars of the drive screw. Loudin teaches a particular example of a

drive screw connection that has the claimed features. The benefits of the Loudin drive screw connection are that it is strong, and doesn't wipe the threads (see col. 1, lines 49-col. 2, lines 48.)

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth Ilan whose telephone number is 571-272-6673. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Ruth Ilan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3616
7/10/06

RI